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ABSTRACT

In the British post-colonial era, instruction in English as a second language has developed stronger ties to the field of applied linguistics than to education. Both British and foreign instructors have been trained in linguistic rather than educational theory and practice. One result has been a cadre of specialists not fully prepared for jobs in which managing curriculum change is a central function. It is important for language teachers to understand the ideological basis of the curriculum and their different realizations in objectives, content, methodology, and implementation of curricular innovation. The situational curriculum model offers a useful framework for curriculum development. It begins with the situation as it exists, but also draws on both the means-end and process models. It can be seen as a curriculum renewal model because it acknowledges existing practices, and it offers both practical and rational bases for dealing with the complexities of curriculum renewal and the management of innovation. (MSE)

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CURRICULUM STUDIES AND ELT

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Introduction

Historically, as Howatt (1984) shows, ELT has evolved from a tradition which has been largely separate from mainstream education, and the predominant influences on the development of ELT as a profession have come from applied linguistics. The founding fathers of the British tradition were phoneticians or language specialists, and it is only West who began his career with what we now refer to as Third World experience and, indeed, he may be credited with conducting the first major needs analysis in relation to the broader developmental requirements of West Bengal. West also conducted one of the first Which? type comparisons of methodology, although it must be said that it lacked the rigour which would nowadays be required of such a comparison.

Sweet's earlier proposals for reform were also field trialled, by Klinghardt, a realschule teacher from Silesia, who adapted Sweet's methods and demonstrated their feasibility in the classroom. Trialability, as we shall note later, is an aid to the successful diffusion of an innovation , and in this respect, Sweet's proposals were in advance of their time. In comparison, Palmer, though having a most important influence on the evolution of British ELT, was much less successful in installing his innovations within the Japanese educational system, for reasons which are largely to do with the problems of curriculum innovation and management.

What is notable is that both ELT and MLT — as Hawkins (1981) shows — remained for many years largely isolated from educational influences in the metropolitan arena. Hawkins suggests that the universities, under whose influence MLT remained straightjacketed, did not take methology seriously, and as a result generations of MLT teachers passed into the profession without any really serious pedagogical training . Indeed, it was only in the post-war era that concern with the training of MLT, as part of the PGCE, focussed on pedagogical issues by giving some attention to the initial preparation of language teachers.

Meanwhile, during the same period, ELT had either gone private or had travelled abroad , to work within colonial education systems. It would probably not be overstating things to say that such issues as consultation and the encouragement of local initiatives were not a strong tradition within colonial systems. Uniformity and conformity to centrally defined standards would be more characterstic, and it is this ethos which became the model for post-colonial education systems, with their emphasis on centralized control of the curriculum.

The other significant ELT development in the post-war era — the growth of the private sector — has also isolated ELT from the metropolitan state system, and, given the importance of the private sector in the expansion of ELT, it is not surprising that the two systems have remained

Curriculum Ideology	Language Syllabus/ Method	Curriculum Model	Innovation Model	Innovation Strategy
Classical Humanism	Grammar-Translation	Classical	Centre-periphery	Power-coercive
Reconstructionism	Audio-lingualism Notional-functional	Rational Planning & objectives (Taba, Tyler)	Research, Development, Diffusion (RD&D)	Empirical-rational Power-coercive
Progressivism	Task or methods based, Process (Breen & Candlin) Procedural (Prabhu)	Process (Stenhouse)	Problem Solving	Normative-re-educative

Figure 1 : The relationship between ideology, curriculum models and innovation

separate. Indeed, ideologically, the two have tended to be quite different in outlook and attitude.

In the metropolitan setting in the post colonial era, the preparation of ELT specialists has followed the applied linguistics tradition. Thus, students from overseas have attended courses which have given them a very sound foundation in orthodox applied linguistics thinking of the period, while even in those education departments in which such ELT courses are taught, more emphasis has been placed on the linguistic than on the educational aspects of the programme. Similarly, British teachers undertaking such courses will have received a comparable exposure stressing applied linguistic theory and practice , rather than ELT as education.

Thus, a gap has arisen, in which an applied linguistics basis to what Richards and Rogers (1982) have termed approach, design and procedure has been stressed, while wider educational issues have been given much less attention. I would suggest that one result of this has been the evolution of a cadre of ELT specialists whose concerns have been rather narrowly based, and whose opportunities for drawing on work in other fields has, as a consequence, been limited. Unfortunately,in my view, they have not been fully prepared for the jobs which they will eventually have to do -- jobs in which the management of curriculum change will frequently be a central function.

The Ideological Basis to Curriculum

Let us begin by considering the ideological basis of curriculum. This is something which tends to be ignored, even if recognized in a rather hazy way by most of us. Yet, the ideology — or value system -- which lies at the heart of any approach to educational issues and decisions, is crucial, since everything stems from the beliefs and values which we bring to any aspect of our work as teachers.

Views on the nature and purpose of education include those which emphasize the transmission of an esteemed cultural heritage, those which stress the growth and self-realization of the individual and those which regard education as an instrument of social change. Respectively, these three orientations or ideologies have been termed classical-humanism, progressivism and reconstructionism (Skilbeck 1976). Classical-humanism is associated with Arnold and Eliot, progressivism with Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel, and reconstructionism with Dewey.

In language teaching, each of these ideologies finds realization in different proposals as regards aims, content and methodology. The grammar-translation method is an expression of classical-humanism. Audio-lingualism and notional-functional syllabuses can be viewed as different realizations of reconstructionism. The proposals of Krashen and Terrell (1983), Breen and Candlin's (1984) process syllabus, and Prabhu's procedural syllabus(Prabhu 1987) are differing manifestations of progressivism. As will be clear even from these examples, different ideologies give rise to very diverse views both as to the purposes and methods of language teaching as well as to the most effective ways of implementing language curriculum innovation.

Reconstructionism is associated with a systems-behavioural approach

(Crawford-Lange 1982), in which the pedagogical procedures are based on Skinner's application to education of the principles of operant conditioning (Skinner 1968). The emphasis is on incremental and mastery learning, in which each succesive step is based on a preceding step, and " it is assumed that, given appropriate learning activities, all students can achieve mastery if they have enough time" (Crawford-Language 1982:88). In language syllabus design, such views have been realized in the grading of structural syllabuses and in the concept of graded objectives.

Progressivism, by contrast, coincides with what Crawford-Language characterizes as Problem-posing education, which "extracts a concern for the real-life situation of the learners as well as a perception of the student as decision-maker" (Crawford-Language:88). The two central pedagogical concepts of this approach are praxis and dialogue , the former being "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire 1974:36), the latter being "the educational context, the place where praxis occurs", the purpose of which is "to stimulate new ideas, opinions and perceptions rather than simply to exchange them" (Crawford-Language:89). Both the concepts and the terminology have been drawn upon in proposals for process syllabuses in language teaching (Breen and Candlin 1984).

Whereas progressivism is concerned with 'doing things for' or 'doing things with' the learner, reconstructionism involves 'doing things to' the learner (Davies 1976:32). Reconstructionism emphasizes the importance of planning, efficiency and rationality, and it involves "the elevation of teachers and other members of a carefully selected and highly trained elite of educators who are designated the agents of cultural renewal..." (Skilbeck 1976). Figure 1 summarizes the relationship, as I see it, between curriculum ideologies and models, language methods and innovation models and strategies, the last being an aspect of curriculum renewal not discussed in this paper.

Views of the Curriculum

From ideological bases to curriculum, let us now turn to the curriculum itself. Ideas on curriculum also differ. On the one hand, curriculum may be viewed as

> ...the programme of activities...the course to be run by pupils in being educated (Hirst, 1969).

On the other hand, curriculum may be defined as

> all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups of individually, inside or outside the school (Kerr 1968).

Hirst refers to the programme of activities, while Kerr refers to the activities themselves . One school of thought regards the curriculum as a plan , whereas the other views it as activities . Sockett (1976:22) succinctly characterizes this distinction as

> the difference between a plan of a house or a

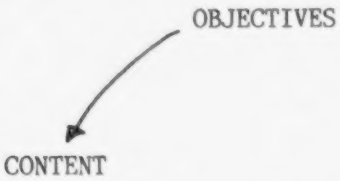
journey and the house or the journey.

Taking the house metaphor a stage further, we could see the curriculum as being one or all of three things. Firstly, it could be like a plan of a house yet to be constructed. In this sense, the curriculum is future directed towards an objective yet to be realized and it is, in essence, synonymous with the most widely held view of syllabus.

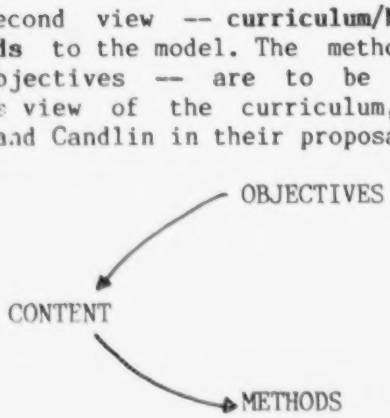
Secondly, curriculum could be seen as being like a plan of how to build the house. Again, the orientation is to the future, but in this case, the concern is with the systems that are needed in order successsfully to build the house. The specification for such systems and their successful operation will draw upon resources and personnel not immediately involved in the construction process itself, while the successful operation of the systems will also require the skills of the manager as well as those of the craftsman.

Thirdly, the curriculum could be seen as being like the view of the house after it has been completed and is a dwelling for its inhabitants. The conception of the house possessed by the people living in it will be determined by the use they make of the dwelling: does it match their living requirements, how do they use the spaces and facilities within the structure, what modifications might they want to make to it to make it conform more usefully to their requirements?

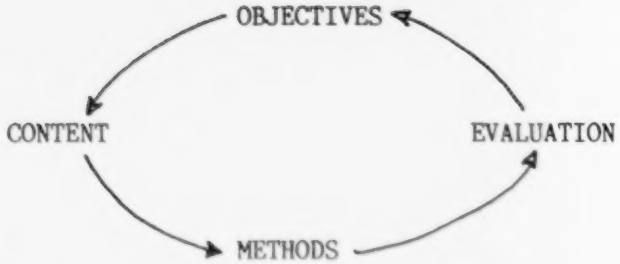
The first view -- **curriculum/house = plan** -- shows a concern with **objectives and content**, which are two of four elements in the traditional model of the curriculum.



The second view -- **curriculum/house = construction system** -- adds **methods** to the model. The methods are the means by which the ends -- the objectives -- are to be achieved and this forms the basis of a process view of the curriculum, as outlined by Stenhouse and adapted by Breen and Candlin in their proposals for the process syllabus.



The third perspective -- **curriculum/house = dwelling** -- adds a fourth and final element: **evaluation**. In other words, do outcomes match objectives? Does the dwelling conform to the requirements of its inhabitants?



Evaluation, as feed-back (or monitoring), will also form a component of the construction-systems model, since quality control will be an important element of any production system. It is through monitoring and feed-back that planned and actual outcomes can be compared and appropriate remedial action taken to repair failures or deficits. Thus, feedback will have a **formative** effect on action and will operate at every stage.

The future orientation of the first two perspectives may be contrasted with the 'here and now' viewpoint of the third approach, as I have characterized it. The distinction reflects what I would see as being a difference in attitudes towards curriculum, although they should be regarded as being complementary rather than being in conflict. Problems can arise, of course, if, by focussing on the future, attributes of the present are ignored or sacrificed. Also, if one may take the house metaphor a step further, it is rarely the case that curriculum developers are able, unlike property developers, to begin with a clean site. Most curriculum development and curriculum proposals occur within existing systems.

Thus, the third perspective may represent a more realistic approach, since it takes account of existing systems before initiating proposals for change. The systemic changes and the installation of new elements will, of course, require planning and the effective use of systems in order to realize new objectives, so that each of the first two approaches will make imporant contributions to an overall process of curriculum development.

I would like to suggest that ELT has been overly concerned with curriculum as plan. This may be seen in the attention which has been devoted to syllabus specification. Indeed, for a period, one might have supposed that the only issue of concern in ELT was syllabus design. But a syllabus is little more than a specification of content. It is a plan of ends, without any attention to means. The apogee of this approach may be found in the Munby (1978) model, which sets out to provide a scheme for defining outcomes -- that is, the plan of the building.

What such an approach does not indicate is the specification of the process whereby the plan is to be realized. In other words, no indication of means is indicated. Indeed, this is quite specifically repudiated. A specification of means, and the adaptation of the plan to such situational constraints as may be revealed in subsequent stages, is not even addressed in such a model.

More recent work in ELT curriculum development has indicated the

importance of means analysis (Holliday 1983, Holliday & Cooke 1982). What such work has drawn attention to is the significance of situational and cultural factors in language curriculum development. Bowers (1983) has also graphically drawn attention to the complex network of elements within which any curriculum development project exits and which it interacts. Similarly, recent papers by Markee (1986a, 1986b) have highlighted the importance of cultural and political factors in any proposals for language curriculum innovation.

What none of these discussions has done is to refer to the educational literature as a source of principles and procedures for curriculum development, even though the views presented are in line with much thinking in this educational field. While I would not suggest that the only answer to our concerns as ELT curriculum developers lies in available curriculum models, I would like to suggest that reference to these may provide us with a framework or scheme within which to enact our own affairs.

The Situational Curriculum Model

One model which seems to me to offer a very useful framework is the situational curriculum model proposed by Malcolm Skilbeck. His model has two particular attractions. Firstly, it begins with the situation -- thus its name. To return to our house metaphor, the idea with the situational model is to look at the dwelling as a current habitation, and to work out from there to such adaptation as is needed in the light of the changing needs of the inhabitants. It is a way of reaching an understanding of the educational environment as it is at the moment, rather than promoting a utopian plan for a future dwelling.

Secondly, the situational model makes provision for drawing on the means-end or objectives model on the one hand, or the process model on the other. In other words, it is eclectic to the extent that different ends as well as different means are recognized as being available, according to the needs and wants of the inhabitants.

The situational model might best be called a curriculum <u>renewal</u> model since, unlike those models associated with reconstructionism or progressivism, it begins by acknowledging existing practices. It does not begin with the assumption that curriculum proposals are to be written on blank slate -- or even that what is already on the slate should be automatically be obliterated. The analysis and appraisal of the school situation itself is an important starting point, since one of Skilbeck's major concerns is with school-based curriculum development, which he defines as

> the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of a programme of students' learnings by the educational institution of which these students are members (Skilbeck 1984:2).

He goes on to say that an educational institution

> should be a living educational environment, defined and defining itself as a distinct entity and

> characterized by a definite pattern of relationships, aims, values, norms, procedures and roles.

He believes that curriculum development will be something internal to the institution, not imposed from without, but at the same time "the curriculum should not be parochially conceived" because the institution is part of a network of relationships which include stake-holders other than the members of the school itself. Among these stake-holders are the students, and Skilbeck advocates participatory decision-making in the curriculum which will involve the students "in determining the pattern of experiences they are to undergo."

In advocating school-based curriculum development, Skilbeck is well aware of the effects of controls which are extrinsic to the school, and he notes that

> neither the independent initiatives of the school nor those larger external forces in the curriculum are by themselves sufficient for achieving the systemwide kinds of changes that are needed. Imposed change from without does not work, because it is not adequately thought out, or it is not understood, or resources are not available to carry it through, or because it is actively resisted. Within-institution change is, by its nature, situation specific, often piecemeal, incomplete, of mediocre quality and so on. Each process requires the other, in a well worked out philosophy and programme of developments (5).

Here, Skilbeck raises issues which are relevant to the management of curriculum innovation.

A summary of his situational model for school-based curriculum development is set out in Figure 2.

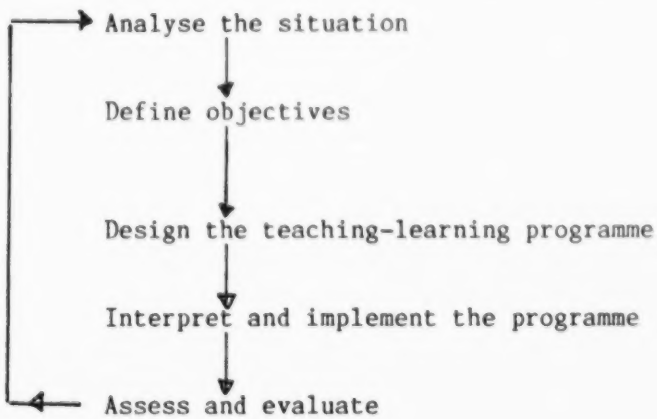


Figure 2

Skilbeck acknowledges that

> such a diagrammatic representation of the process of curriculum making must simplify and risk distortion by its very brevity and apparent orderliness (231).

"Let us be ready," he says,

> to take concurrently or even in reverse what may suggest themselves to the orderly-minded as items for step-by-step progression (232),

thus echoing the point made by Wiseman and Pidgeon (1970) on the overlapping of activities which will occur in any truly effective developmental programme.

The usefulness of such a sequence of actions, Skilbeck suggests, lies in three things.

> First, we may use it to provide a resume, a kind of prospectus of tasks to be accomplished. Second, it can be the basis of agreed action and hence help in reducing arbitrary or authoritarian decisions, a matter of some importance when hierarchies may feel challenged by unstructured reviews and evaluations. Third, it will be useful if it encompasses, in simplified ways, crucial and productive kinds of action....Fourth, what is proposed is useful if it helps in the presentation and communication to interested parties of what is planned and is happening in the curriculum.

Furthermore,

> Problems of communication, shared values and expectations, of differences of interpretation, of inadequate implementation, frequently arise.

Skilbeck suggests that school-based curriculum development, in which the people interpreting and implementing it were party to its design, should be more effective because "the curriculum is not an accidental extra ;but is of the essence of the institution." However, successful implementation cannot be gaken for granted -- and this takes us to his fifth step, that of assessing and evaluating.

Skilbeck distinguishes between assessment and evaluation in the following terms:

> assessment in the curriculum is a process of determining and passing judgements on students' learning potential and performance; evaluation means assembling evidence on and making judgements about the curriculum including the processes of planning, designing and implementing it (238).

From a curriculum viewpoint, continuous rather than summative assessment is indispensible, which means a change in evaluation aims and procedures

(see Parlett & Hamilton 1977), with evaluation forming part of planning as a cyclical process. In fact, evaluation has come to occupy a central place in much recent discussion on curriculum development generally and language teaching specifically (e.g.Alderson 1985). Indeed, evaluation occurs at all stages of curriculum development, as illustrated in Figure 3.

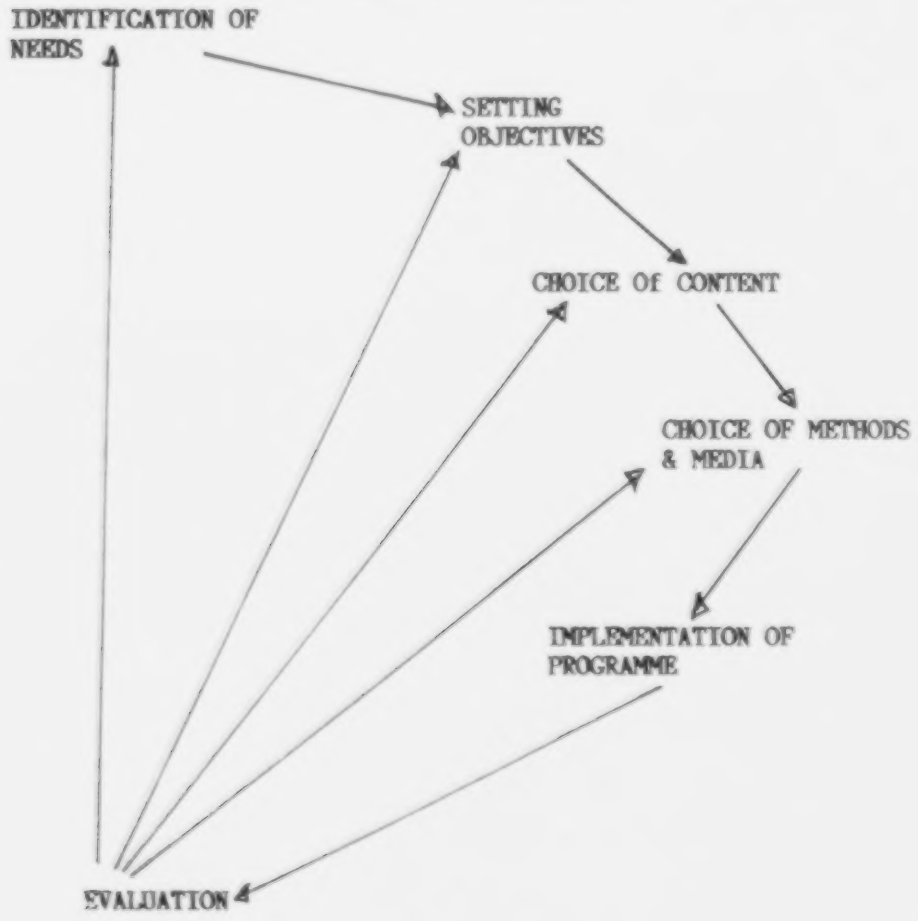


Figure 3 The Place of Evaluation (adapted from Bramley, 1986)

The situational framework can embrace both objectives and process models, depending on which aspects of the curriculum are being designed. Skilbeck, in fact, doesn't see the objectives and process models as being in conflict and, as is clear from the steps enumerated in his model, the definition and redefinition of aims is crucial. One appeal of this model is that it involves an understanding of the situation as it currently exists, which requires gathering information from which a definition of a problem may emerge. Another appeal of this model is that the development procedures which are advocated take account of the problems involved in implementing curriculum innovation so that, far from being divorced from the arena in which change will occur, the situational model takes this as its starting point. Or, to put it another way, we begin with the dwelling and the way in which it is used and perceived by its inhabitants.

The rationality of Skilbeck's framework encourages a moderately systematic approach to curriculum development, and it provides a useful scheme within which to plan language curricula and, indeed, in some ways it serves to systematize existing practice in language curriculum development. Furthermore, as language curriculum development has tended to be closely focussed on questions of content and objectives, the breadth of Skilbeck's model may serve to open up the field in a way that should be enormously helpful. Finally, his emphasis on curriculum development as school-based matches the rise of local as opposed to national initiatives in language curricula, and thus it can inform and guide an existing trend. In short, it seems to me to offer both a practical as well as a rational basis for dealing with the complexities involved in language curriculum renewal, and itfits in well with the management of curriculum innovation, which is the subject of a separate discussion.

Conclusion

So, to conclude: as ELT specialists, we have much to gain from placing our own concerns within the arena of education. After all, our concerns are educational ones, even if, for reasons that I have suggested earlier, we have evolved a separate tradition of our own. To remain isolated from education, however, is to cut ourselves off from colleagues whose concerns are allied to our own, while together we can make useful contributions to the development of thought and practice, not only in language teaching, but in the broader area of curriculum studies.

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